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Role model (in) advertising?

The reading of the newspaper provides a lot of work, [...] [he] is a careful reader.

No advertisement or announcement in small print escapes his notice.

B. Schulz, Edzio¹

Useful confrontations

The observable and systematically increasing interest in advertising among literary scientists² has various sources and different goals. When and why does advertising seem intriguing to them and what benefit can such a focus offer them? Advertising draws the attention of researchers studying the art of the word when it is assigned the features of a phenomenon with a (quasi-)literary dimension, as well

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¹ Bruno Schulz, *Eddie*, [in:] *Sanatorium Under The Sign Of The Hourglass*, trans. Celina Wielewska, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston – New York 1997, p. 167.

² It is documented by several publications – e.g. J. Wicke, *Advertising Fictions. Literature, Advertising and Social Reading*, Columbia University Press, New York 1988; cf. also “eadem, James Joyce and Consumer Culture”, [in:] *The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce*, D. Attridge (ed.), 2nd edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2006, pp. 234–253; G. Leonard, *Advertising and Commodity Culture in Joyce*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville 1998; cf. also G. M. Leonard, “Advertising and Religion in James Joyce’s Fiction. The New (Improved!) Testament”, [in:] *James Joyce and Popular Culture*, R. B. Kershner (ed.), University Press of Florida, Gainesville 1996, pp. 125–138; J. Strachan, C. Nally, *Advertising, Literature and Print Culture in Ireland, 1891–1922*, Palgrave Macmillan [London] 2012; N. Mason, *Literary Advertising and the Shaping of British Romanticism*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 2013; M.L. Ross, *Designing Fictions. Literature Confronts Advertising*, McGill-Queen’s University Press, Montreal & Kingston–London–Ithaca 2015. Cf. also, e.g. A.L [Aldo Skudrzykowa], “Literatura a reklama”, [in:] *Szkolny słownik wiedzy o literaturze. Pojęcia – problemy – koncepcje*, R. Cudak, M. Pytasz (eds.), Videograf II, Katowice 2000, pp. 242–245.

as when one considers it as an autonomous field of communication capable of various interactions with literature. In the former case, an observation made by Janusz Sławiński still seems current; he indicated a common practice “literary reading” in terms of non-literary texts³ (it is visible, e.g. when “an advertising slogan is considered as a type of poetic epigram”⁴) and stressed that such actions *summa summarum* “shape our sensitivity (and suspicion) as readers towards literature living outside of literature.”⁵ Elżbieta Sidoruk in a review of a book by Tomasz Stępień entitled *Zabawa – poetyka – polityka*, where one of the descriptions devoted to street advertising was entitled *Poezja ulicy* (Street Poetry), stated that

the openness to non-literary texts has a revitalising effect on the discipline. And not only in the sense that the tools developed by it work in the studies of fringe literature, but also because the result of such analyses is a new array of instruments which can be used for defining literary texts.⁶

One does not even have to reach that far to notice that even the reconstruction of the premises which lead to viewing advertising in non-literary categories – without deciding about the appropriateness of the reasoning used – may bear certain research benefits as it enables the research to define the “non-literary” nature (a notion which is key for literary science studies)⁷ in its structural and pragmatic conditions and the variable historical dynamics.

The literary scientist can also benefit from approaching advertising when respecting its independence and treating it as a separate phenomenon which constitutes a multi-faceted point of reference for writing output. From that perspective, the scale and the mode of how the achievements are sometimes directly absorbed, utilised, and transformed by advertising seem intriguing. By tracing literary references in advertising content one can trace the reception and the social resonance of the art of the word, its current power of influence, and the cultural conditions it is subject to, as well as the principles of its inter-semiotic translation and its recognition conditions (e.g. through schematically and laconically approached originals, clad in a persuasive, coat adopted from the arts, i.e. quotations, motifs, characters, etc. one can determine the communicative minimum value which makes literary allusions clearly perceivable and offering basic accessibility or, constituting an information addition as per the principle of “dual coding”, determine various reception principles).

³ J. Sławiński, “Jedno z poruszeń w przedmiocie”, [in:] *Prace wybrane Janusza Sławińskiego*, W. Bolecki (ed.), vol. III: Teksty i teksty, Universitas, Krakow 2000, pp. 61–65 (first printing: *Teksty*, 1975, issue 4, pp. 1–5).

⁴ Ibid., p. 65.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ E. Sidoruk, [review of: T. Stępień, “Zabawa – poetyka – polityka”, *Śląsk*, Katowice 2002], *Pamiętnik Literacki*, 2006, coll. 2, p. 254.

⁷ Vide E. Balcerzan, *Literackość. Modele, gradacje, eksperymenty*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika [Monografie FNP], Toruń 2013.

Other benefits may result from confronting literature with advertising when the two do not necessarily influence each other, yet shed light on or verify one another⁸. Some conclusions from observing the verbal properties of specific advertisements can, e.g. constitute a point of reference for studying the linguistic formation and the stylistic values of works of literature created within the same period (such comparisons may, hypothetically at least, indicate certain circumstances of the linguistic devices used in the text, reveal possible borrowings and the degree of text saturation with colloquialisms, indicate the relations between a formal idiom and everyday speech, etc.) One could also refer to advertising when trying to establish the reality related to customs, traditions, and various other elements of the public realm to which a specific work refers – for example, to confirm the compliance of the components of the presented world with historical reality or to identify unintended or purposeful anachronisms⁹, or even to use it to establish or specify the style of the work. Of course, in such situations, references made to the advertising content fulfil an auxiliary role as they only possess the ability to strengthen or weaken the argument put forward in support of the proposed interpretative theses¹⁰. They prove particularly useful when attempting to define the

⁸ That was somewhat the source of the nowadays popular approach to include copies of specific advertisements in compendiums regarding literature, handbooks, and most of all popular science works as illustrative additions and context – vide, e.g. volumes of the *A to Polska właśnie* series published by Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie.

⁹ In the light of the content of advertising, one could, e.g. argue with Anna Nasiłowska, who, during a radio programme aired on Polish Radio Two in January 2006, immediately after Marek Krajewski received the “Paszport «Polityki»” award reproached him for including in his novel entitled *Koniec świata w Breslau*, a story which took place during the interwar period, numerous unintentional anachronisms and inconsistencies, e.g. in winter, the character served asparagus, a fact which considering the lack of technical capabilities for storing it, would not have been possible at that time of the year. In fact, advertisements popular in the Polish lands even before WWI praised, e.g. Weck’s preserver used for preserving vegetables in such a way so that they could maintain their properties all year round. Such an advertisement was copied in A. Janiak-Jasińska, *Aby wpadło w oko... O reklamie handlowej w Królestwie Polskim w początkach XX wieku na podstawie ogłoszeń prasowych*, Wydawnictwo DiG, Warsaw 1998, p. 115 (I quote its text excluding its visual elements and the graphic layout): “Cook for the future in J. Weck’s preserver! APSARAGUS, peas, crayfish in winter, grey partridges, game, corned meat, tripe, etc. during summer heatwaves are no longer a luxury or curiosity! Cook for the future in J. Weck’s preserver in the right season and preserve the original freshness for years.”

¹⁰ A similar rule applies to the situation when knowledge gained from a work of literature is used for positive or negative verification of conclusions drawn from the analysis of specific advertisements. Researchers refer to advertisements as a valuable source of information on the history of material culture and the customs or the way of life in a specific epoch by sometimes comparing their findings with the message derived from literary texts of the same period. Cf, e.g. E. Kowecka, *Sprzedać! Kupić! Sklepy warszawskie z artykułami domowymi 1830–1870*, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Archeologii i Etnologii PAN, Warsaw 1998, pp. 116–117 – the researcher indicated that even though the products advertised in the Polish lands in the second half of the 19th c. included the highly praised mechanical drum washing machine, neither family diaries nor belles-lettres (or even death inventories of Varsovians)

nature of literature through its (non)inclusion of expected content. Then, having established whether specific themes function in other areas and even their possible degree of encompassing taboo, one can modify the beliefs established on the basis of just the literary message¹¹. This matter was interestingly presented by Jacek Łukasiewicz, who juxtaposed the meaning and the poetics of press releases, including poetic works and texts regarding the objectives of literature, published in Polish newspapers since 1945 with the contents of printed announcements within the same period and in the same sources. When poets published propaganda and politically engaged poems in newspapers, similar in style to the one written by Jerzy Lovell: "Factories ablaze with the redness of their stalks/ slanting houses kneel to the ground – / we want to give bread and sun to our sons, / the joyous sky over the roofs of suburbs"; or Jalu Kurek: "Cereal for Szczecin. / Cereal for Gdańsk. / Sea for the Tatras. / Sea for Silesia. / Sea for Krosno (*Pieśń bałtycka*); or Stanisław Ryszard Dobrowolski, encouraging people in 1946 to participate in the referendum: "I cried all my life: No!" only to now "like a silver bird in the sky / Carrying spring / Our new, victorious, simple: / YES THRICE"; the style of announcements, which better reflected the social reality, needs, and atmosphere of those times, appeared as follows: "The CLAIRVOYANT «Themis» tells the future astonishingly accurately, Krakow, Zwierzyniecka 6/5"; "PSYCHOGRAPH Kalwan sees guests together with his famous medium Miriam..."; "SHARPENING razors factory quality..."; "MIDWIFE Krowicka returned from Warsaw, offers shots..."; "FOR PENSIONS, hotels, hospitals, I calculate calories at home..."¹²

That type of juxtaposition may also be used for artistic effects, a fact which was proved in a book by Martin Pollack entitled *Po Galicji. O chasydach, Huculach, Polakach i Rusinach. Imaginacyjna podróż po Galicji Wschodniej i Bukowinie*,

confirm a wider group of buyers of the invention or that it even roused any considerable interest, unlike the sewing machine promoted at roughly the same time (an interesting fact mentioned by Kowecka was a reference to the washing machine as a sign of being European that appeared in the 1877 novel *Anna Karenina* by L. Tolstoy). Similar comparisons from the position of a historian of material culture were offered by, e.g. A. Janiak-Jasińska, who referred to diary accounts, epistolography, and memoirs of J. Iwaszkiewicz and to *Lalka* by B. Prus (A. Janiak-Jasińska, *op. cit.*, e.g. pp. 62, 74, 97, 101–102, 131).

¹¹ Cf. e.g. A. Chałupnik, *Sztandar ze spódnicy. Zapolska i Nalkowska o kobiecym doświadczeniu ciała*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Errata, Warsaw 2004 – the publication included drawings, supplementing the author's discussion, from specialist or promotional medical guidebooks, mainly from the early 20th c., but it would also fit reprints of advertisements of the same period presenting the manifestations, discussed by Chałupnik in later chapters, of the 19th-century images of the differences between sexes, female maturation, sexuality, and maternity. Press advertisements printed more or less in the same period were discussed and copied by A. Janiak-Jasińska, *op. cit.* – vide in particular pp. 38–52, 69–70, 95–106. It would be interesting to compare the findings of both authors, even more so since Janiak-Jasińska provided examples of advertisements which would not only perfectly match Chałupnik's discussion, but also enrich it.

¹² J. Łukasiewicz, "Wiersz wewnątrz gazety", *Teksty Drugie*, 1991, issue 4, pp. 21–23. The quotes come from *Dziennik Polski* published in Krakow by Spółdzielnia Wydawnicza Czytelnik – from various issues from 1946.

*czyli wyprawa w świat, którego nie ma*¹³. The author built a story about a world long gone, his special guidebook or a report, or maybe an anthropological-literary essay, by limiting his own comments and referring to the illustrative function of quotations – from works of literature, memoirs, tourist guidebooks, historical studies, and even newspapers, including advertising published within them. Jan Gondowicz in an essay entitled “Mój Zakopanoptikon” (from the *Skok w bok* series published in an internet magazine and website *dwutygodnik.com*) constructed a summary of all the matters that occupied the inhabitants and frequent visitors to Zakopane during the interwar period using only extracts from *Głos Zakopiański* from 1923–1924, supplementing them profusely with classifieds printed in the newspaper¹⁴ (in a way, the entire text, considering its title, could be read as an appendix to the satirical novel by Andrzej Strug entitled *Zakopanoptikon* from 1913–1914 and to its lesser known continuation entitled *Wielki dzień. Kronika niedoszłych wydarzeń* from 1926¹⁵).

The juxtaposition of the advertising and literary focuses offers educational value, which is why such comparisons are often used at school, or at least is advised to be used by many theoreticians. This is how teachers are encouraged to reflect during Polish language classes on advertising and how the resulting benefits are justified:

an opportunity to use the specified text for educational purposes is, e.g. a task to look in them for idioms, discuss them, analyse their purpose, and the inventiveness in their application. [...] During the search, you could also focus on the core of the slogan, its poetics, on its psychological influence as the most famous advertising slogans have become an element of students' jargon in which they are immersed as in evocative code words eliciting specific associations. The most common include: “Wyzwanie to ubranie” (Challenge them with clothes), “Co krok to szok” (A shock at every step), “Jak pięknie być sobą” (How beautiful to be yourself), “Bo każda kobieta ma wiele twarzy” (Because every woman has many faces). The last advertising slogan could be used to open a discussion on the theme of *gęba* (mug) in *Ferdynand* by W. Gombrowicz. And even though some may perceive the proposal as offensive, it could be close to what Gombrowicz intended as it was he who through his works fought with conventions, tradition, and with one of the major issues of poetics, i.e. *form*¹⁶.

Such recommendations fit the present trend in education to explain phenomena which are unclear for students, which are distant from current aesthetics and thus difficult to learn quickly, by seeking analogies of point of view, i.e. by referring to things well-known to them, close to them, which they can verify empirically as they stem from their personal experiences or are in an obvious way imposed by

¹³ M. Pollack, *Po Galicji. O chasydach, Huculach, Polakach i Rusinach. Imaginacyjna podróż po Galicji Wschodniej i Bukowinie, czyli Wyprawa w świat, którego nie ma*, trans. A. Kopacki, 2nd edition, Wydawnictwo Czarne, Wołowiec 2007.

¹⁴ Vide J. Gondowicz, “Skok w bok”: “Mój Zakopanoptikon”, <http://www.dwutygodnik.com/arttykul/4071-skok-w-bok-moj-zakopanoptikon.html> [accessed on: 2016.11.15]. The text was included in J. Gondowicz, *Duch opowieści*, Nisza, Warsaw 2014, pp. 92–98.

¹⁵ I provide the dates of first press printings. Both novels by A. Strug were published in book form only in 1957.

¹⁶ A. Kulak, “Zainteresujmy się reklamą”, *Warsztaty Polonistyczne*, 1998, issue 4, p. 30.

the cultural context¹⁷. The usefulness of analysing advertisements in education and for developing the tools necessary for that end when interpreting poetic texts was indicated, i.a. by Ewa Jaskółowa who analysed a poem by Wisława Szymborska entitled *Prospekt* (Prospectus)¹⁸, which emulated the layout of an advertising flyer and thus is perfect for comparing with persuasive messages.

As one can see, the most obvious stimulus for emphasising advertising references is supplied by literary texts and writers' works aimed at that type of reference (and it is no secret that their significance in the 20th and 21st centuries has visibly increased). That uncovers an extensive and natural area for research as one can study the impact of advertising on the origins of specific works, and trace advertising references so common in the themed layer of texts; it is possible to reveal their formal inspirations from advertising, and establish how advertising determines literary communication and how it influences specific strategies of writers; it is also possible to verify in that respect how compatible the declarations of creators are with their artistic initiatives¹⁹. And all that to better understand the causative intentions of texts, the rules of their organisation, the secrets of writers' practices, the creative process itself, and, as a result, also the historical-literary norms.

Advertising signs

Pretexts for seeking bridges linking literature with advertising are mainly offered by those works and literary approaches where the traces of references are documented and clear. A model example of that seems a story by Bruno Schulz

¹⁷ A similar tendency was expressed by W. Godzic who indicated that high school students and university students can be taught the principles of Sarmatism by seeking its contemporary counterparts in consumer culture epitomised by McDonald's restaurants (W. Godzic, "Intelektualista w McDonald'się", [in:] *Oglądanie i inne przyjemności kultury popularnej*, Universitas, Krakow 1996, pp. 167–168).

¹⁸ Vide E. Jaskółowa, "Interpretacja – czyli o możliwości pokazania poezji i manipulacji reklamą", [in:] *Relacje między kulturą wysoką i popularną w literaturze, języku i edukacji*, B. Myrdzik, M. Karwatowska (eds.), Wydawnictwo UMCS, Lublin 2005, pp. 273–280. Vide conclusions drawn from those discussions: "young people's fascination with advertising, one of the dominant popular texts in today's world, can be used by teachers as an argumentative stimulus for analysing poems as advertisements being oral works require interpretation and that skill is best acquired through observing the word in its artistic form." (ibid., p. 280) The author also referred to the analysis of *Advertisement* in another article – vide E. Jaskółowa, "«Ocalony» słucha, «jak mi prędko bije twoje serce». Gdy komunikacja przestaje być porozumieniem", *Język Artystyczny* 2010 [vol.] 14, pp. 33–42 (cf. especially pp. 39–41).

¹⁹ I discuss some of those issues in separate articles – vide M. Lachman, "Literatura wobec reklamy. Rekonesans", [in:] *Literackie reprezentacje doświadczenia*, W. Bolecki, E. Nawrocka (eds.), IBL PAN [series: *Z Dziejów Form Artystycznych w Literaturze Polskiej*, vol. 88], Warsaw 2007, pp. 451–480; "Pod znakiem reklamy. Literatura polska po 1989 roku w kręgu oddziaływania kultury konsumpcyjnej", [in:] *Inna literatura? Dwudziestolecie 1989–2009*, vol. I, Z. Andres, J. Pasternski (eds.), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Rzeszowskiego, Rzeszów 2010, pp. 41–74.

entitled *Księga* (The Book), the opening story of *Santorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, published in 1937. Its plot centres on an attempt to find the mysterious Book, with which the child protagonist who is also the narrator came into contact. The memories of The Book amalgamated in early childhood and carried ever since have driven him; he is basically searching not for an item, i.e. a specific book, but the state in which it put him, ensuring a sense of being in contact with the Secret, significance or at least a sense of initiational fulfilment (the protagonist's pre-occupation is sometimes interpreted as the experience of the first erotic ecstasy or stimulation on that basis). The search in which the people surrounding him are engaged brings no results. Copies of respected works of culture (which even include the Bible) offered with good intentions by adults are consistently treated by the protagonist as duds or unworthy substitutes of the Original, having no resemblance to it at all. The child narrator is convinced that the closest to perfection is an abandoned and incomplete magazine (or maybe a sales catalogue?²⁰) with only the final pages preserved. A scrap of paper²¹ none of the family members considered as valuable (Adela, the servant, claimed she systematically tore out its pages to pack meat or lunch for the father). In the narrator's perception, huge potential illumination is stored in the surviving press ads (constituting a foreshadowing or a materially fulfilled premonition of existence familiar with the Original). One of the classifieds has for the protagonist a special, almost epiphanic, importance: the story of Anna Csillag who suffered hair loss and had to endure the abuse of her peers until, through a miraculous turn of fate, she was offered a formula which constituted an exceptional antidote for her embarrassing condition:

I looked at the picture. On a large folio page there was a photograph of a rather squat and short woman with a face expressing energy and experience. From her head flowed an enormous stole of hair, which fell heavily down her back trailing its thick ends on the ground. It was an unbelievable freak of nature, a full and ample cloak spun out of the tendrils of hair. It was hard to imagine that its burden was not painful to carry, that is not paralyze the head from which it grew. But the owner of that magnificence seemed to bear it proudly, and the caption printed under the picture told the history of the miracle, beginning with the words: 'I, Anna Csillag, born at Karlovice in Moravia, had a poor growth of hair...'

It was a long story, similar in construction to the story of Job. By divine will, Anna Csillag had been struck with a poor growth of hair. All her village pitied her for the disability, which they

²⁰ J. Ficowski claimed that the actual Book materialised in "the classified section of an old weekly adorned with advertising etchings" (J. Ficowski, "Ilustracje do własnych utworów", [in:] *Regiony wielkich herezji. Bruno Schulz i jego mitologia*, Fundacja Pogranicze, Sejny 2002, p. 467).

²¹ It may be significant, though – from the perspective of stylometry – that the word appeared in the story as many as six times, and its final instance starts with a capital letter and is equalled to "the Original", which appeared in the text five times in total ("the Book" is mentioned, including the title, fifteen times while "a book" ten times; in addition, there are single instances of the words "volume", "Code", as well as "apocrypha", "copy", and "imitation" – as terms defining book instances; the Bible is mentioned twice).

tolerated because of exemplary life she led, although they suspected it could not have entirely undeserved. But, lo and behold, her ardent prayers were heard, the curse was removed from her head, and Anna Csillag was graced with blessing of enlightenment. She received signs and portents and concocted a mixture, a miraculous nostrum that restored fertility to her scalp. She began to grow hair, and what is more, her husband, brothers, even cousins were covered overnight with a tough, healthy black coating of hair growth. On the reverse of the page, Anna Csillag was shown six week after the prescription was revealed to her, surrounded by her brothers, brothers-in-law, and nephews, bewhiskered men with beards down to their waists, exposed to the admiration of the beholders in an eruption of unfalsified, bearlike masculinity. Anna Csillag became the benefactress of her village, on which the blessing of wavy heads of hair and of enormous fringes had descended, and whose male inhabitants, henceforth, could sweep the ground with their bears like broad besoms. Anna Csillag became the apostle of hairiness. Having brought happiness to her native village, she now wanted to make the whole world happy and asked, begged, and urged everyone to accept for their salvation the gift of the gods, the wonderful mixture of which she alone knew secret.²²

The story entitled “The Book” referred not only to the advertisement of hair growth pomade promoted by Anna Csillag. With piety and care, and with his characteristic ability to supplement and create stories which could have originated in viewed or read advertisements, the narrator also contemplated other newspaper sales announcements²³: Sybil’s prophecies (“long-haired” just like Anna Csillag); an advertisement of the “Elsa – the Liquid with a swan” preparation, a miracle drug for virtually all health conditions, the effectiveness of which was attested by its grateful users; an advertisement of musical instruments (“harmoniums, zithers, harps”), and barrel organs; classifieds encouraging the purchase of songbirds (canaries, goldfinches, and starlings); the range of services offered by Signor Bosco of Milan, the mysterious “master of black magic”²⁴; and, finally, a classified recommending a memoir entitled *The Purple Days* by Magda Wang, a specialist “in human taming”. All the indicated motifs were referred to in another location in the text, thus fuelling the story created by the narrator (i.e. constructed by Schulz):

The Authentic lives and grows. What does this mean? Well, perhaps, next time when we open out old script, we may not find Anna Csillag and her devotees in their old place. Perhaps we shall see her, the long-haired pilgrim, sweeping with her cloak the roads of Moravia, wandering in the distant land, through white villages steeped in prose and drabness, and distributing samples of Elsa’s balm to God’s simpletons who suffer from sores and itches. Ah, and what about the worthy village beavers, immobilized by their enormous beards? What will that loyal commune do, condemned to the care and administration of their excessive growths? Who knows, perhaps they will all purchase the genuine Black Forest barrel organs and follow their lady apostle into the world, looking for her everywhere while playing “Daisy, Daisy”?

²² Bruno Schulz, *The Book*, [in:] *Sanatorium Under The Sign Of The Hourglass*, pp. 4–5.

²³ B. Schulz, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–115.

²⁴ More on the character and the methods of his inclusion in the world of Schulz, vide A. Cza-banowska-Wróbel, “W poszukiwaniu Autentyku: Księga Alfikcji”, [in:] *Bruno od Księgi Blasku. Studia i eseje o twórczości Brunona Schulza*, P. Próchniak, EMG, Krakow 2013, pp. 85–99.

Oh Odyssey of beavers, roaming from town to town with barrel organs in pursuit of your spiritual mother! Is there a bard equal to this epic subject, who has been left in their village and is now wielding the spiritual power in Anna Csillag's birthplace? Couldn't they foresee that, deprived of their elite, of their splendid patriarchs, the village will fall into doubt and apostasy and will open its gates – to whom? Whom but the cynical and perverse Magda Wang (published by the Anthroposophical Institute of Budapest), who will open there a school of human dressage and breaking of character?

[...]

Let's return to the Authentic. We have never forsaken it. And here we must stress a strange characteristic of the script, which by now no doubt has become clear to the reader: it unfolds while beings read, its boundaries open to all currents and fluctuations.

Now, for instance, no one is offering goldfinches from the Harz Mountains, for from barrel organs of those dark men the feathery little singers fly at irregular intervals, and the market square is covered with them as with colored twigs. Ah, what a multiplication of shimmering chattering birds!... On all the cornices and flagpoles, colorful bottleneck are formed by birds fluttering and fighting for position. If you push out of the window the crook of a walking stick, it will be covered chirping, heavy bunch of birds before you can draw in back into your room.²⁵

One does not require a much experienced eye and ear to notice that the inserts referred to in the text (in the form of descriptions, quotes, ekphrases, allusions, always functioning as stimuli for developing according to their own rules of storytelling) have much in common. Together they also constitute a sufficient reason and material to consider Schulz's approach to advertising²⁶ and ask about the possible scope and meaning of that type of inspirations, their functional structure, and the use in the works of the Drohobycz author. What, then, fascinated Schulz in advertising – because one can state a clear attention to and admiration for at least a specific type of classifieds? Surely what is important is that Schulz, in the reality presented in his story, used references to advertisements which had their actual counterparts, i.e. were based on real classifieds. Studies of his works often copied a classified featuring Anna Csillag²⁷, while the website brunoschulz.org,

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 11–13.

²⁶ The stories could offer another pretext: *The Street of the Crocodiles* (because of banners and other sales attributes of the title street), "The Night of the Great Season" and "Dead Season"; or maybe *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* (it is not insignificant that the father, remaining outside the normal dimension of time, was sent by the family to the Sanatorium under the influence "by skillful advertising").

²⁷ In its various language variants – the most popular German version is copied by, e.g. J. Ficowski *Okolice sklepów cynamonowych. Szkice, przyczynki, impresje*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków–Wrocław 1986 (in the attached appendix with illustrations – fig. 1); J. Jarzębski, *Schulz*, Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, Wrocław 1999, p. 132; M. Kitowska-Lysiak, "Ja, Anna Csillag...", [in:] *Schulzowskie marginalia*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin 2007, p. 48 – also a Hungarian (p. 54) and a Russian variant (s. 66). One of the Polish versions of the advertisement was presented in J. Gondowicz, *Duch opowieści*, p. 4 (cf. a drawing of Anna Csillag taken from the classified and copied on the cover). Another Polonised variant, probably closest to that which directly inspired

which is an invaluable source of knowledge on significant contexts in the output of the author of *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*, collects different variants and versions of the advertisement in different languages, often published in the European press (mainly Central European) since more or less the 1980s²⁸. The website also records actual ads which presented the Elsa Fluid, popular in magazine ads sections and in popular calendars, another speciality mentioned in “the Book”²⁹. It is plainly visible what types of advertisements had a preferential standing in the story. And it is not because they were advertisements of medicinals or cosmetics, though one should remember that the object of the ads was not without importance. As Leo Spitzer wrote (NB, a researcher making initial studies in advertising from the philological perspective analysing it *explication de texte*³⁰):

It may be noted that the first advertisements to appear regularly in American newspapers (in the middle of 19th century) were those of patent medicines, with their claims of miraculous efficacy. It is highly significant that the industry of advertising had its inception in an appeal to the age-old craving to be saved by magic from the ills and shortcomings of the flesh³¹.

The same type of advertisements also dominated outside of the American continent. They were extremely popular in Schulz’s youth³². They could had been hypnotic and enchanting for the writer³³ as they included the drive to satisfy eternal

Schulz, was presented in *Słownik schulzowski*, W. Bolecki, J. Jarzębski, St. Rosiek (ed.), słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk, year missing [2004], p. 65 and J. Ficowski, *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolicy*, p. 213 – in that variant, Anna Csillag was compared to a fairy.

²⁸ Vide <http://www.brunoschulz.org/csillag.htm> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]. The list is being updated on an ongoing basis. One can view there variants of the advertisement in German (a separate instance for the Austrian market), Polish, Hungarian, Russian, and Slovene. A similar advertisement in Yiddish can be found at: <http://www.tumblr.com/search/Anna-Csillag> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]. The descriptions in various sources indicate that the advertisement had also Czech and even Finnish versions.

²⁹ Vide <http://www.brunoschulz.org/elsafluid.htm> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

³⁰ „I shall seek to analyse a given advertisement in the same unbiased manner as I have attempted to do in the case of a poem of St. John of the Cross or a letter of Voltaire, believing, as I do, that this kind of art, if not comparable in greatness to the texts usually analyzed by the scholar, offers nevertheless a “text” in which we can read, as well in its words as in its literary and pictorial devices, the spirit of our time and of our nation” (L. Spitzer, *American Advertising Explained As Popular Art*, [in:] *Essays on English and American Literature*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey 1962, p. 250)

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

³² That has been confirmed by findings made by material culture researchers made outside of the context of Schulz’s works – vide A. Janiak-Jasińska, *op. cit.*, p. 52–71. Interestingly enough, the author found an advertisement of the preparation recommended by Anna Csillag in the *Kurier Warszawski* daily (1903, issue 3) – vide *ibid.*, p. 39, note 58. The researcher referenced that classified as an example of an advertisement with visual elements presenting the effects of the promoted goods indicating that its graphic components could have been closely related to the content of the message, but their meaning appeared obscure and illegible without the verbal support (*ibid.*, pp. 38–39).

³³ The topic of the captivating charm of such advertisements, influencing the child’s consciousness in particular, was raised around the time of the original publication of *Sanatorium Under*

human desires, an emphasis on both the beneficial and supernatural effect of the promoted preparations, and references to an extra-rational order of reality (Anna Csillag, as was already indicated, appeared in “the Book” as not just an ingenious inventor but basically a mystic³⁴).

Not only the fact that the 19th-century history of advertising began with promoting pharmaceuticals with extraordinary effects is symptomatic, but also that the first persuasive message, though not free of some visual identifiers and components usually in the form of drawings or other forms of applied graphics, often did take the shape of announcements emphasising their strong verbal, and thus narrative and literary, nature:

In the Polish press, the 1970s was a time of a tumultuous advertising boom. The technical capabilities of advertisement illustrations were still meagre, which was why press announcements had to mainly utilise words. [...] In view of today's norms, the advertisements of those times were wordy, but that is also why they appear, particularly today, as little literary gems.

One such literary advertisement was immortalised by Bruno Schulz by including it in *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass* – an ad of the exceptional pomade for hair growth invented by the mysterious Anna Csillag³⁵.

The classifieds referred to by Schulz featured a dominance of verbal elements over visual ones (though their graphic layer was not without significance: the imagination of the child narrator of “the Book” was mainly stimulated by etchings which completed and substantiated the presented mini-stories³⁶), and offered special literary values as their contents often form – which could have been the

the Sign of the Hourglass by W. Lidin, “Ja, Anna Csillag... Zwodziciele z minionej epoki”, *Głos Poranny. Specjalny Dodatek Świąteczny* of 24.12.1936, pp. 19–20 [supplement to a Łódź-based *Głos Poranny*, 1936, issue 353]. Digitalised copy is available in Biblioteka Cyfrowa: Regionalia Ziemi Łódzkiej przy Wojewódzkiej Bibliotece Publicznej w Łodzi: <http://bc.wimbp.lodz.pl/dlibra/publication?id=15919&tab=3> [accessed on: 10.12.2016].

³⁴ W. Orliński, “Duch Anny Csillag”, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2001, issue 8, p. 10. Cf. also remarks by M. Jarnotowska, “Brud jako metafora w twórczości Brunona Schulza”, *Prace Polonistyczne*, 2014 (series LXIX), pp. 126–127.

³⁵ W. Orliński, *op. cit.*, p. 10 [my emphasis – M. L.].

³⁶ The significance of the graphic layout of advertisements with which the protagonist of “The Book” came into contact was discussed by J. Ficowski, *Ilustracje do własnych utworów*, pp. 467–468. Ficowski saw an analogy between the way in which the protagonist of “The Book” treated the graphic elements of the advertisements he contemplated and the value Schulz assigned to the “plastic supplement of his writings”, i.e. to the illustrations of his works: “As some testimonies and accounts suggest, drawings were for Schulz a kind of writing stimulation, a harbinger of prose, not only a servient form for the text to which they belonged as plastic annexes. They were something more: *sui generis* evocative signs, iconographic devices initiating the creator's imagination, offering a direction of verbal expression, a starting point for further construction of prose, writer's creation – thus an auxiliary means. [...] But drawings, being illustrations, became not only works which accompanied prose, not only its support or embellishment, but also evocative factors for the text to be – dynamic written images. It was the drawing, like an initial, that set off the creative imagination

thing which drew the writer and the protagonist created by him – micro-stories, taking the shape of coherent, self-contained, and finite short stories (with exposition, rising action, the climax, and the ending in the form of a happy ending, sometimes also an epilogue amplifying the result of the fortunate and successful solution to the problem). Such advertisements seem to provoke description using the tools and notions similar to those used for analysing works of literature (one could – on a micro scale, of course – use for them summaries, view the creations of a first-person narrator or protagonist included in them, define the characters presented in them, describe the elements of the presented world, trace their specific rules of storytelling and the narrative progression, reconstruct the layout of the story...). By enhancing the information on the advertised product with accounts of people who tried it themselves, its author increased its believability, it was used to raise the interest of the receivers, and, at the same time, it was supposed to evoke interest in the offer through empathy. The text created in the poetics of a confession was constructed in such a way to make the potential buyer feel invited to empathic reception, and to become a somewhat important part of the presented story which intentionally oscillated between intimacy and controlled exhibitionism:

a popular form of large and medium-sized advertisements (over 100 words in the main body of text) was the statement of the interested: customers or authors – creators of the advertised products [...]. The style of a personal confession could make those texts convincing, especially when they applied to intimate or embarrassing issues, which one would only mention, it seems, in the case of extraordinary events. “I was bald,” stated menacingly, almost as if admitting one’s guilt, the heading of an ad in *Kurier Warszawski* of 1906. The following text only amplified that: *Until recently, I was completely bald. My grandfather and my father were bald. My mother had always had sparse hair. I became reconciled to the thought that I will be bald forever when... there appeared a formula for hair growth so good that after having grown a thick crop of hair the character began selling the product [...].* The three stages principle of storytelling was, apparently, used often. In the case of statements by the original inventors or manufacturers, the readers could have been impressed not by the courage necessary to admit some unpleasant maladies, but the strength of public announcement of the success. Possibly the firmness of the sentence: *I, Anna Csillag, possess exceptionally long (185 cm in length) hair, resembling Lorelay – thanks to a 14-month-long use of my personally prepared pomade raised the receiver’s trust [...]*³⁷.

Schulz was drawn by the inclination, clearly typical of many press advertisements, towards storytelling and fictionalisation as well as hyperbolisation, their inherent creative potential and the restrained extent of the epic, in which the schematic story both paid homage to and escaped from its own structural restraints. It was typical that each classified referred to in “The Book” included either a complete story or its nucleus, and stimulated the protagonist’s imagination through, e.g.

on the next stage of its mythicising mission, entering metaphor, transcending its limits, and transforming it into a metamorphosis shaping the nature of Schulz’s reality.” (ibid., pp. 466–467).

³⁷ A. Janiak-Jasińska, *op. cit.*, pp. 60–61.

its narrative availability. At the same time it must have been puzzling, the extent of the influence and the suggestive power of advertising messages the contents of which successfully fuelled the cultural reservoir of mass imagination or could even interfere with the order of real life (as has been the case of the Bébé Cadum, still being studied by anthropologists, a cute toddler, whose image was featured in the streets of Paris and other French cities even before WWI as a result of intensive advertising campaign for soap. It was enthusiastically received, and it was inscribed in people's minds so strongly that they often wondered about and debated the wartime fortunes of the child and its parents³⁸). In other words, Schulz found the advertising's predilection for mythologisation attractive. And that is quite close to *mythisation*, a notion which occupied in Schulz's lexicon a particularly preferential position. In his manifesto entitled *Mityzacja rzeczywistości* (Mythisation of reality), which Włodzimierz Bolecki proposed to be read as a literary self-commentary³⁹, Schulz wrote that "The most primal function of the spirit is the telling of tales, making up of «stories»."⁴⁰ Advertising (more precisely: the specific type which drew Schulz's attention) could have enchanted the author of "The Age of Genius" through its ability to relate to "common stories," or the ability to (re)activate and create.

One could even pose a conservative hypothesis that some influence on the formation of Schulz's variant of "poetic model of prose"⁴¹ had the suggestive nature of at least some of the micro-stories included in classifieds.⁴² The focus

³⁸ Vide, e.g. L. Stomma, "Etnolog i reklama", [in:] *Mitologie popularne. Szkice z antropologii współczesności*, D. Czaja (ed.), Universitas, Krakow 1994, pp. 117–118 (the first version of the essay was published under the title "Historia współczesności", *Polska Sztuka Ludowa. Konteksty*, 1994, issue 1–2, pp. 46–47). An example of the suggestive influence of the indicated advertising campaign was a sentence included in a 1978 book by Georges Perec entitled *Je me souviens*: "Je me souviens de «Bébé Cadum»" ("I recall «Bébé Cadum»" – vide G. Perec, *Pamiętam że. To, co wspólne I*, trans. K. Zabłocki, Wydawnictwo Lokator, Krakow 2013, pp. 35). It was a chronicle of that what was past, often already removed from the collective memory, but still worth maintaining due to its former magical aura, and influence on everyday life. It would be worth a separate analysis in terms of its references to advertising.

³⁹ W. Bolecki, "Mityzacja rzeczywistości: koncepcja literatury Brunona Schulza", [in:] *Modalności modernizmu. Studia, analizy, interpretacje*, IBL & Fundacja Akademia Humanistyczna, Warsaw 2012, pp. 447–452.

⁴⁰ B. Schulz, *Mityzacja rzeczywistości*, [in:] *Opowiadania. Wybór esejów i listów*, p. 366.

⁴¹ Vide W. Bolecki, "Język poetycki i proza: twórczość Brunona Schulza", [in:] *Poetycki model prozy w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym. Witkacy, Gombrowicz, Schulz i inni. Studium z poetyki historycznej*, 2nd edition amended, Universitas, Krakow 1996, pp. 225–302.

⁴² Such insight was offered by J. Ficowski, *Ilustracje do własnych utworów*, p. 468: "There is a certain kinship between the etiology of those ["those," i.e. described in the world presented in "The Book" under the influence of stimuli coming from advertisements, which the protagonist perceived – M.L.] myth-forming processes and the writer's creative method, in which the sorcery of the word is supported by etchings, which foreshadow and authenticate «the heretic doings» in areas of the word."

on extending a poetic aura, on the magical effect, and creating *in statu nascendi* meaning instead of reporting prior knowledge, on extracting from words unexpected semantic layers of energy thanks to generating clashes between them, and introducing them in new semantic orders, accumulations of meaning, specific combinations of descriptions with stories... – such characteristics would fit the specifications of at least some advertising operations in terms of their narrative and verbal formation. *Toutes proportions gardées*, they would also match the findings which Włodzimierz Bolecki offered in the conclusions of his discussion of Schulz's model of prose:

On the one hand, the narrator described events which once did take place (that emphasised the epic narrative detachment), while on the other, the events were mainly drawn from expressive principles, which in turn removed their epic priority in relation to the act of storytelling. The narrative expression ceased to be a story about what once happened as it itself proved an event in the language. [...] The world presented in Schulz's prose proved to be also a result of linguistic operations and not just a record of autobiographic instances.⁴³

Of course, I am far from claiming that Schulz owed everything, or even a lot, to classifieds. I only posed a thesis that their influence was not limited simply to fuelling the contents of the stories, but had a direct correlation to their form, on their presentation method, and the general literary assumptions. The micro-stories of the classifieds could have been a small ray of light activating the creative power in the completely innovative and proprietary "Księga Blasku"; they could have intuitively directed the writer's actions; they could have constituted a slight stimulation, from which the author of *The Street of Crocodiles* and *Mythisation of reality* was able to draw far-reaching artistic consequences, and knew how to transform into innovative shapes.

In order to grasp the originality of Schulz's approach to advertising, one needs only to contrast it with the manner of handling a similar theme set:

Wiosna 1989

On French television, most interesting are the advertisements or rather a guessing game as to what is actually being advertised. If a naked bimbo stretches delightfully on a Persian rug and douses herself in perfume it does not necessarily mean that she fell into that ecstatic state by smelling Chanel n°5 or rubbing on the magnificent carpet. Her euphoria came from a delicate, fragrant, and almost sensitive toilet paper pressed against her cheek. Then, if they show a fragment of Verdi's opera, surely what they are advertising is a rare steak. Why? Beats me, but that is nice, surprising, and colourful. Sometimes as funny as the Apocalypse: a hut with escapees hiding in it somewhere deep in Siberian taiga becomes surrounded by Red Army soldiers. They break down the door, windows, and drop down through the chimney. The scene ends with

⁴³ W. Bolecki, *Język poetycki i proza: twórczość Brunona Schulza*, pp. 300–301 [author's emphasis].

a sentence: Russian gas will penetrate everything! My friend, who has been living in France for quite some time, came to the conclusion while watching the commercial that soon we will see Chagall recommending trips to Chernobyl or the White Sea-Baltic Canal.

“What are you saying,” I asked surprised. “Chagall is dead...”

“So what! That’s even better, they will pay him even more! And also, just turn the tv off, it irritates me and the whole of France is irritating. If that France was in Poland, people would appreciate it. But here, the French eat, drink, and think only about eating and drinking. No problems. Everything just like those commercials – easy and meaningless.”⁴⁴

It is easy to indicate the differences between Schulz’s approach and the one typical for the world of today (I consider the fragment from the quoted text as a conventional example of the current realisations of a similar theme). The differences do not stem only from the fact that in the quoted passage the described advertisements are presented through a medium different from that in the case of Schulz (a television commercial vs. classifieds) and with different dominant features. The creation of advertising micro-stories is done today, as the above-quoted text recorded, often with minimal support of words or without the use of words at all, i.e. mainly using images or with a predominance of images. The method of imaging and the general principle of representation are much more significant: Schulz referred to advertisements rather conspicuously referring to actual classifieds, simply “quoting” the reality, making it the starting point for the act of creation and conducting his own writing activities (just like Cubists used actual newspapers and other elements available in their reality for creating collages), while in the text created in the last few decades the foundation in that which is concrete has ceased to be important, the favoured approach now is to create “a copy without the original” as it is rather impossible to precisely indicate the prototypes of the described advertisements or, in other words: they can be indicated in very many instances. Today, an artist often uses an indirect form of describing reality, she copies and compiles its second-hand components, willingly frames them in the form of an abstract and homogenic extract, in other words, constructs a *simulacrum*. She behaves like a painter who in order to depict a landscape does not paint it based in its natural state, but sets as the point of reference images processed by various media, utilises, e.g. the images and patterns offered by the expansive mass media.

Furthermore, the different approach to advertising as a communicational phenomenon is also significant. In the case of Schulz, the glorifying aspect was superior; the writer treated advertisements as attractive sources of inspiration, the advertising material functioned with an aura of attention and revelation. Today, the sarcastic-ironic approach is typical, what is dominant is the aversion and disillusionment towards the manipulative, captivating, and dumbed down techniques

⁴⁴ M. Gretkowska, *My zdies’emigranty*, 2nd edition, W.A.B., Warsaw 1995, pp. 22–23.

of persuasion accused of, i.a. shaping, and legitimising the consumerist way of life. Such an approach to advertising does not translate, though, to inventiveness in terms of literary solutions. It only amplifies the temptation to slide deeper into remaining solely discursive, and to reporting or simple illustrating, otherwise well-known, sociological diagnoses.⁴⁵

Schulz, even if he owed something to advertising, never allowed it to become a burden on him, so that he would have to pay off some tribute, for him it was no kind of a limitation; it rather became a pretext to conduct original creative activities. For writers who are active today, the case is different: a satirical approach to advertising or parodying it does not translate to developing any alternatives to it, nor does it result in any creative transcendence outside the circle of its extra-textual influence. In other words, they do not include any space left for a surprise, a peculiarity and artistic out-of-the-box activities resulting from unexpected sources of inspiration.

The history of Anna Csillag

The character of Anna Csillag from a press advertising campaign popular in the late 19th c. in Central Europe became a circulating motif with an extensive range, and a significant influence. It has been discussed in various articles in various languages.⁴⁶ The studies or remarks focussed on establishing facts (the most important of those were the discussions whether Anna Csillag was a completely fantastic creation or maybe had an actual equivalent⁴⁷), the expressiveness, suggestiveness, and the efficiency of the marketing activities⁴⁸, and the resilience of the basic idea as an endless source of artistic inspiration.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ One example from a contemporary novel: “You have a class of strong young men and women, and they want to give their lives to something. Advertising has these people chasing cars and clothes they don’t need. Generations have been working in jobs they hate, just so they can buy what they don’t really need” (Ch. Palahniuk, *Fight Club. Podziemny Krag*, trans. L. Jęczyk, Wydawnictwo Niebieska Studnia, Warsaw 2006, p. 169).

⁴⁶ An extensive, representative, though not exhaustive, summary is available at: <http://www.brunoschulz.org/csillag.htm> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁴⁷ Today, researchers are leaning towards the second hypothesis – vide Eve Offenthaler, *Biographie des Monats: Ich, Anna Csillag – ein k. k. Marketingstar*, Institut Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon und biographische Dokumentation, April 2012, http://www.oeaw.ac.at/fileadmin/Institute/INZ/Bio_Archiv/bio_2012_04.htm [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁴⁸ Ibid. A reference to an advertisement featuring Anna Csillag was included in, e.g. the Hungarian equivalent of the mocking *Nonsensopedia* – vide entry: *Reklám*, *Unciklopedia*, <http://unciklopedia.org/wiki/Rekl%C3%A1m> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁴⁹ Vide, e.g. K. Sýs, “Já, Anna Csillagová... aneb Dechová opora literatury”, *Obrys-Kmen* 2000 (vol. 6), issue 10, p. 1 [supplement to *Haló noviny* 2000, issue 59]; Studiolum, *I, Anna Csillag*, 30.01.2010, <http://riowang.blogspot.com/2010/01/i-anna-csillag.html> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]; the entry is also available in Hungarian – vide Studiolum, *Én, Csillag Anna*, 29.01.2010, <http://>

In Poland, the character of Anna Csillag and her signature advertisement have been studied by, Jerzy Ficowski⁵⁰, Jerzy Jarzębski⁵¹, in the column form by Wojciech Orliński⁵², and most recently by Jan Gondowicz⁵³ (who even dedicated his book to Anna Csillag, thus making her the patron of the stories included in the work⁵⁴), and by Paweł Mielczarek (in his blog entitled *Nakład Niewyczerpany*, as if under the influence of Gondowicz and in an *ad vocem* form, though with valuable additions).⁵⁵ A special place among those studies is occupied by the study by Małgorzata Kitowska-Łysiak, who approach the topic three times⁵⁶ interpreting the symbolism and the cultural-anthropological dimension of the main attributes of Anna Csillag (long hair as a fetish of femininity), and reconstructing the sexual-libido connotations in the manner of approaching the character both in advertising and literature, at the same time indicating several literary references to the specified motif. In an essay entitled *Ja, Anna Csillag* (included in the collection entitled *Schulzowskie marginalia*)⁵⁷ she noted that the character of popular classifieds recommending the purchase of the formulation for hair growth was featured

wangfolyo.blogspot.com/2010/01/en-csillag-anna.html [accessed on: 2016.11.14]; Світлана Тараторіна, *О, Анно Чиллаг, тебе не забуде Європа! Про зірку реклами XX сторіччя*, 30.08.2013, <http://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2013/08/30/135421/> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]; Kalendarium Dawnej Prasy [blog], *19 XI 1899: ja, Anna Csillag z olbrzymimi włosami*, November 2013, <http://kalendariumdawnejprasy.blogspot.com/2013/11/19-xi-1899.html> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁵⁰ Vide J. Ficowski, "Księga, czyli powrotne dzieciństwo; Fantomy a realność"; "Feretron z pantofelkiem"; "Przyczynki do autoportretu mitologa"; "Ilustracje do własnych utworów", [in:] *Regiony wielkiej herezji i okolice*, pp. 29–39 (especially pp. 32–33), 70, 110, 211–213, 467–468.

⁵¹ Vide J. Jarzębski, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁵² W. Orliński, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

⁵³ J. Gondowicz, "Csillag znaczy gwiazda", [in:] *Duch opowieści*, pp. 7–10. The text was first printed in *Nowe Książki*.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 6. Its reviewers did not remain indifferent to its patronage and in their discussions also related to it – cf., e.g. P. Paziński, "Archeolog wyobraźni", *Tygodnik Powszechny* 2014, issue 28 [suppl. to *Książki w Tygodniku. Magazyn Literacki*], pp. 16–17, <https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/archeolog-wyobrazni-23484> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]; M. Larek, *Duchy Gondowicza*, eCzasKultury.pl, 04.06.2014, <http://e.czaszkultury.pl/przygody/przygody-popularne/1658-jan-gondowicz-duchy-opowiesci> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]; Tomasz Wiśniewski, [review of J. Gondowicz, *Duch opowieści*], *culture.pl*, 02.07.2015 July 2015, <http://culture.pl/pl/dzielo/jan-gondowicz-duch-opowiesci> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]. M. Robert, "Czytelnik absolutny", *Nowe Książki*, 2014, issue 8, pp. 56–57; D. Pawelec, "Symetroskop Gondowicza oraz inne detale", *Akcent*, 2015, issue 1, pp. 129–132; A. Sikora, "Fantastyczna zoologia stosowana", *Twórczość*, 2015, issue 6, pp. 105–107.

⁵⁵ P. Mielczarek, "Goście z przeszłości", *Nakład Niewyczerpany* [internet blog], 15.10.2014, <http://nakladniewyczerpany.blogspot.com/2014/10/goscie-z-przeszosci.html> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁵⁶ Vide M. Kitowska-Łysiak: "Ja, Anna Csillag...", [in:] *Fermentum massae mundi. Jackowi Woźniakowskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, N. Cieślińska, P. Rudziński (eds.), Agora, Warsaw 1990, pp. 323–327; entry: "Csillag Anna", [in:] *Słownik schulzowski*, pp. 64–67; "Ja, Anna Csillag...", pp. 47–67.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

not only in “The Book” but was also present in a poem by Józef Wittlin entitled *À la recherche du temps perdu*, fulfilling a role similar to Proust’s madelaine; she was also referenced in *Treatise on Poetry* by Czesław Miłosz⁵⁸ (and in the notes by Renata Gorczyńska on the allusions included in the work⁵⁹), and thanks to Anna Szałapak, a performer of the Piwnica Pod Baranami comedy show, she appeared in song form (the lyrics of *Anna Csillag*, a song which was a permanent part of the singer’s repertoire, referenced fragments of Schulz’s story, the original advertisement and fragments of poems entitled *Przyśpiew* and *Z dziennika* by Bolesław Leśmian⁶⁰); she also appeared in *The Arcades Project* by Walter Benjamin⁶¹, in a story entitled *The Portrait* by Leonid Dobyczin⁶²; finally, in a memoir article by Reinhold Hanisch on the Austria years of Adolf Hitler⁶³. The list is in by no way

⁵⁸ The line in question: “And so Anna Csillag’s hair grew and grew” included in the first part of *Treatise on Poetry* entitled “Beautiful Times”. Cf. also the unreferenced by M. Kitowska-Lysiak remark of the poet to the sentence: “All dailies in the Habsburg monarchy included the image of the girl from Moravia as an advertisement of the effectiveness of the hair growth formula. By using it she grew hair which reached her feet” (vide Cz. Miłosz, *Traktat poetycki z moim komentarzem*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Krakow 2001, p. 12).

⁵⁹ Vide R. Gorczyńska (Ewa Czarnecka), “Cudze słowo w «Traktacie poetyckim»”, [in:] *Podrózny świata. Rozmowy z Czesławem Miłoszem. Komentarze*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Krakow 1992, p. 290.

⁶⁰ Vide M. Kitowska-Lysiak, *Ja, Anna Csillag*, pp. 61–63.

⁶¹ W. Benjamin, *Pasaże*, trans. I. Kania, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Krakow 2005, p. 232. Cf. also review of *Pasaże* – A. Lipszyc, “Księga Benjamina”, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2006, issue 42, p. 24.

⁶² Vide L. Dobyczin, “The Portrait”, [in:] *Miasto En. Opowiadania*, trans., afterword and notes by H. Chłystowski, Czytelnik, Warsaw 1999, p. 161. We are still only discovering that Russian avant-garde writer who having been accused in the Soviet Union of formalism and subjected to censure probably committed suicide in 1936.

⁶³ R. Hanisch, “I was Hitler’s Buddy”, *The New Republic*, 1939, April 5, pp. 239–242 (a note on Hitler’s fascination with the advertising campaign of an anti-hair loss pomade featuring Anna Csillag was included on p. 241: “At that time there was a picture in all the newspapers of a woman named Anna Csillag, with long hair that reached to the floor, and below her picture was an advertisement, starting with the words: «I, Anna Csillag...» recommending an infallible hair-growing remedy. Hitler thought something of the kind ought to be invented. He admitted that the story of Anna Csillag was an obvious bluff, but he said one could earn plenty of money with it. He proposed to fill old tin cans with paste and sell them to shopkeepers, the paste to be smeared on window-panes to keep them from freezing in winter. It should be sold, he said, in the summer, when it couldn’t be tried out. I told him it wouldn’t work, because the merchants could just say, come back in the winter; we don’t need it now. To this Hitler answered that one must possess a talent for oratory. But I thought oratory alone would be useless;”) a scanned version is available on-line at: <http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/projects/hitler/sources/30s/394newrep/394NewRepHanischHitlersBuddy.htm#p3> [accessed on: 2016.11.14]. The text was published posthumously. The information included in it could have contributed to Hanisch’s death as he was probably murdered in a Vienna prison in 1937 (the official version was that he died of a heart attack). M. Kitowska-Lysiak stated that Hanisch died in Buchenwald, but I did not find any proof of that in any of the available sources. Hanisch met Hitler in 1909 in a homeless shelter in Vienna. He helped him sell daubs painted by the future chancellor of the Third Reich to tourists to earn some money. Several years later he forged those

complete as new discoveries are being made in this matter every now and again; Jan Gondowicz recently added to it a mocking column by Wiktor Popławski in *Cyrulik Warszawski* from 1926⁶⁴ (which Józef Wittlin could have used when writing *À la recherche du temps perdu*) and most of all a novel entitled *Wielki dzień* by Andrzej Strug⁶⁵, and an essay entitled *Pani Bovary* by Wojciech Nowicki from his collection entitled *Dno oka. Eseje fotograficzne*⁶⁶ (that text in an earlier version was published in *Tygodnik Powszechny* in a series *Dno oka. Zmysły* entitled “Anna Csillag”⁶⁷) and – only as a reference – in *Cutting it Short* by Bohumil Hrabal⁶⁸.

Based on various findings (thanks to invaluable contributions of blogs and Internet fora), one could continue the list and note that there is something interesting in the very desire to list and catalogue the references to the once trendy advertisement. The careful indexing and listing is accompanied by unselfish joy in making discoveries, and, at the same time, a wish to document the scope of influence and the degree of propagation of the message which etched itself so strongly into the consciousness of the participants of the culture, stimulating their imagination and

works and sold them at a profit (that was the official reason for his arrest). He also wrote a memoir of his youth years stating some facts which were inconvenient for the fascist dictator. Researchers are cautious about the reliability of Hanisch’s accounts, however, the referenced story of an unfulfilled idea for a swindle seems probable. The matter was described a bit differently by Josef Greiner, who wrote that the pomade advertisement caused Hitler’s genuine admiration as the perfect example of propaganda and even though he had no intention in fulfilling the idea of selling a similar formula, he did not exclude the possibility of someone else coming up with such an idea and copying its success (implying: not only commercial) based on an influential suggestion (J. Greiner. *Das Ende des Hitler-Mythos*, Amalthea Verlag, Zürich–Leipzig–Wien 1947, pp. 13–14).

⁶⁴ W. Popławski, “Ja, Anna Csillag”, *Cyrulik Warszawski*, 1926, issue 23, pp. 4–5, on-line: <http://www.sbc.org.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=4217&from=&dirids=1> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁶⁵ A. Strug, *Wielki dzień. Kronika niedoszłych wydarzeń*, Czytelnik, Warsaw 1957.

⁶⁶ W. Nowicki, “Pani Bovary”, [in:] *Dno oka. Eseje o fotografii*, Wydawnictwo Czarne, Wołowiec 2010, pp. 69–76.

⁶⁷ Vide W. Nowicki, “Anna Csillag”, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 2009, issue 38, p. 51. In the book version, the author emphasised the relation of the character in the photograph he described with Madame Bovary.

⁶⁸ It is worth quoting a fragment from the final scene (key in terms of the symbolic dimension of the novel’s title, where the writer grasped the moment of the also cultural “cutting”, and presented how “the old” ends and “the new” begins), which has rarely been quoted in studies, when Marychna, the protagonist, came to Bodzio Czerwinka with an intention to cut her long hair and a demand to shorten it to the length of Josephine Baker’s hair, thus astonishing and startling the hairdresser: “Bodzio weighed my hair in his hand and goggled at me. [...] – This relic of former Austria? This: “I, Anna Csillag, born in Karłowice in Moravia”? Never! – And thus, Bodzio reluctantly tossed the scissors aside, sat down, folded his arms, and gazed through the window in defiance.” (B. Hrabal, *Cutting It Short*, trans. A. Czcibor-Piotrowski, Świat Literacki, Izabelin 2001, p. 126). Thus, Hrabal also showed how one can update an archetypal situation and motifs through literary storytelling imitating the style of advertising communication as well (through imitating advertising rhymes and slogans, invoking names of manufacturers of goods and the addresses where they can be purchased, or the inclination to create anecdotes based on advertising micro-stories).

fascinating them with its establishment in reality. *The character of Anna Csillag and her signature campaign were referenced by Karl Krauss in a satirical composition entitled Die Welt der Plakate (The World of Poster, 1909); Gyula Krudy, a Hungarian prose writer, in a novel entitled Aranyidő (Golden Times, 1923) and in a short story entitled Az öreg Korányi professzor tanácsa (Advice of Old Professor Korányi, 1929); Kálmán Mikszáth, a Hungarian writer and journalist, in Hogy fogy Matlekovits? (How popular is Matlekovits?, 1885); Miksa Fenyő in Irodalmi vita (Literary Debate, 1915) included in the Hungarian literary journal Nyugat; Josef Greiner in Das Ende des Hitler-Mythos (The End of the Myth of Hitler, 1947)⁶⁹; Mateiu Ion Caragiale, a Romanian writer, in his unfinished novel entitled Sub pecetea tainei (Under the Seal of Mystery), published in journals in 1930–1933 and planned as the second volume of the “Balkan trilogy”⁷⁰; Martin Pollack in a chapter of his book Nach Galizien⁷¹; Ludwik Jerzy Kern in a satirical poem entitled Najpiękniejszy sen roku⁷²; Jacek Dehnel in a prose miniature Anna Csillag included in Fotoplastikon⁷³; Monika Kostera in an untitled haiku written in English in the series entitled Fast Poetry⁷⁴. Another interesting study would be*

⁶⁹ All examples are available at: <http://riowang.blogspot.com/2010/01/i-anna-csillag.html> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁷⁰ Reference to the work can be found at: <http://www.brunoschulz.org/csillag.htm> [accessed on: 2016.11.14].

⁷¹ M. Pollack, “Kołomyja, chwytająca za serce historia Anny Csillag”, [in:] *Po Galicji*, pp. 123–130 (especially pp. 128–130).

⁷² L. J. Kern, “Najpiękniejszy sen roku”, [in:] *Najwyższe wykształcenie*, Krakow 1969, pp. 133–134: “I dreamt at night of Cesi, / That the Beatles came to her. / [...] They came like in the cinema: all four. / They crossed the courtyard carrying their instruments, / Similar maybe a bit to stilag, / And their hair was / Like Anna Csillag”. I was directed towards this poem by a post by Argus9 on a forum on: *Motywy beatlesowskie w literaturze* (Motifs of the Beatles in literature), <http://beatles.kielce.com.pl/phpbb2/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=771&start=60> [accessed on: 2016.11.20]. The post was dated 20.01.2014 and included references to, e.g. the quoted fragment: “«similar maybe a bit to STILAG» – *stilaga* is a Polonised version of the Russian word *stiljaga*. In the post-WWII Soviet Union (in the 1950s and in early 1960s), that was a derogatory term (from the point of view of «the establishment») for someone who through how they dressed (clothing, hair style) differed from the generally accepted norms, and was fascinated with «modern» music”; “«and their hair was like Anna Csillag» – who was Anna Csillag? According to some she actually lived (in the 19th c.), according to others she was purely fictional; either real or not, she was cursed with «low (hair) growth». But, as a result of pious prayers, she was given directions based on which she developed a «pomade» [,] «which restored proliferation to her scalp which began to grow hair», which reached nearly 2 metres! [Anna Csillag and her story were featured in Bruno Schulz’s story entitled «The Book».]” The user included information that the poem was printed in the *Przekrój* weekly in 1965. Wydawnictwo Literackie

⁷³ J. Dehnel, “Anna Csillag”, [in:] *Fotoplastikon*, Warsaw 2009, pp. 220–221.

⁷⁴ Vide M. Kostera, *Fast poetry*, <http://www.kostera.pl/haiku.htm> [accessed on: 2016.12.10]:

Oh star who let your
hair down, pray for us, patron
saint of marketing!
(Anna Csillag)

to trace the references made to Anna Csillag in autobiographical writings and journalist publications, e.g. allusions to her and her signature campaign were made by Jerzy Stempowski in his post-WWII correspondence with Maria Dąbrowska and Aleksander Wat⁷⁵; the same point of reference was used by the world renowned hairstylist Antoine (aka Antoni Cierplikowski) when wanting to exemplify the power of trends, show how that which is new clashes with that which is old, and how inevitably outdated once significant symbols become⁷⁶; finally, Jan Dziedzic, when writing about his Lviv youth, extracted from his memory such images as:

In old, traditional shop windows, one could find the image of a woman with hair reaching down to her feet – the famous Anna Csillag, yet the hair formula supposedly resulting in such a growth was not available. For me, Anna Csillag's hair was repulsive.⁷⁷

Evidently, Anna Csillag could be treated not only as a sign of nostalgia, a symbolic representation of the longing for that which is past, but also as a herald or sign of parting with the fading epoch. There have also been attempts at creating analogies with the character from the old advertisements through purely mechanical associations, e.g. by indicating formal resemblance – as was done by Agnieszka Kania, who, when describing the works of Magdalena Hlawacz, an artist from Opole,⁷⁸ strove to find in the contemporary painting compositions attributes which were characteristic of Anna Csillag. Interestingly enough, the influence of the motif exceeded literature and utility literature by also encompassing the visual arts. A painting entitled *En Csillag Anna* (1977, oil painting, 40 x 30 cm) was created by Anna Margit, a Hungarian painter; then, Marian Paweł Bocianowski, a Łódź-based painter, produced a 1983 drawing – a colour etching entitled *Niezwykły przypadek Anny Csillag* (in it, the artist referred to “The Book” by Bruno Schulz; in fact, he was also the author of a series of works inspired by the stories of the author of *Sanatorium Under the Sign of the Hourglass*). One interesting fact is that in a play directed by Wojciech Maryński entitled *Szał łowienia motyli* based on Schulz's works, staged in Warsaw's Teatr Rozmaitości in the mid-1990s (premiered on 30 September 1995) a separate role was given to... Anna Csillag (played by Katarzyna Gadarska).

⁷⁵ The issue was discussed in detail by P. Mielczarek, *op. cit.*

⁷⁶ The example was included in self-remarks under a blog post: Languagehat, *I, Anna Csillag*, 31.01.2010, <http://languagehat.com/i-anna-csillag/> [accessed on: 2016.12.10]. Vide Antoine [Antoine (Antoni) Cierplikowski], *Antoine by Antoine*, introduction by Lady Mendl, Prentice Hall, New York 1945, p. 96: “Little girls objecting to the torture of hair-brushing and tight braiding were always consoled by the promise of hair as long as Anna Csillag's. But at the mature age of seventy-six, Anna Csillag, probably bored with being an example, had her trademarked hair bobbed and ran the old house of Csillag into bankruptcy.”

⁷⁷ J. Dziedzic “Lwowskie dzieciństwo”, *Rocznik Lwowski*, 2003 (vol. 9), pp. 189–246.

⁷⁸ Vide A. Kania, “Skarby opolskie: Dzikolud czy marzyciel?”, *Gazeta Opole* [supplement to *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2014, issue 67] of 21.03.2014, p. 7.

The final two examples indicate the passable nature of the motif, the presence of which in contemporary projects becomes a result of not a direct reference to the old advertisement but of initiating a literary filter. The mentions of Anna Csillag may, in fact, have different sources and fit a network of intertextual references. In Poland, a point of reference is mainly the prose of Bruno Schulz, sometimes also the poetry of Józef Wittlin or Czesław Miłosz.⁷⁹ However, in the case of Miłosz, commentators raise doubts as to the status of the reference – whether Anna Csillag was a prop borrowed from a newspaper, and the author and the lyrical subject of *Treatise on Poetry* store her in their memories, or her appearance there was mainly a sign of the author's knowledge of the poem *À la recherche du temps perdu* by Wittlin and constituted, first of all, an allusion to that⁸⁰. Various studies include not only disputes regarding specific sources of inspiration, but also, sometimes, mistakes. Jan Gondowicz (using to some extent the prior findings of Małgorzata Kitowska-Lysiak⁸¹) included a clarification regarding the Polish edition of a composition by Leonid Dobychin, which incorrectly explained who Anna Csillag was (mistaking her for a woman – a freak of nature like Julia Pastrana, a Mexican, who both alive and dead, upon embalming, was exhibited in 19th c. Europe as an attraction at fairs and special shows due to the prolific hair cover over her entire body)⁸². When rebuking Dobychin's translator for that commentary lapse (a mistake of lesser significance appeared in an interview with Tomasz Różycki, a contemporary poet, who posed the rhetorical question: "Can the internet be [...] Schulz's Book, which has everything, and mainly an advertisement of Anna Csillag's hair formula?" confusing the pomade with a formula⁸³), Gondowicz showed that the once significant advertising motif was no long recognisable (indirectly visible in the decision of the creators of the film adaptation of *Cutting it Short* by Hrabal – the film did not include a reference to Anna Csillag) and even if it has its own literary life, it has already lost its former universal nature and its range of (general) influence⁸⁴. Which does not mean it is no longer fascinating,

⁷⁹ E.g. W. Nowicki (*Pani Bovary*, pp. 73–75) labelled his essay with a motto in which he included a line devoted to Anna Csillag from *Treatise on Poetry* by Miłosz, and in the text itself he referred to Wittlin and Schulz. It is also worth stressing that the patronage over the entire essay, as its title suggests, was maintained by Madame Bovary, to whom, in turn, B. Hrabal dedicated his *Cutting it Short*.

⁸⁰ R. Gorczyńska (*op. cit.*, p. 290) considered both possibilities as equal. The latter seemed more possible to J. Gondowicz (*Csillag znaczy gwiazda*, p. 7) and M. Kitowska-Lysiak, who also inquired about a possible patronage from Schulz ("Ja, Anna Csillag...", p. 51, 53).

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 65.

⁸² J. Gondowicz, *Csillag znaczy gwiazda*, pp. 9–10. Cf. L. Dobychin, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

⁸³ Vide interview: T. Różycki, "Piszę, więc jestem. Nieśmiertelny", interview by D. Wodecka, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2013, issue 297, pp. 38–39).

⁸⁴ That was somewhat confirmed by the decision of the editors of a high school course book who in the quoted fragment of *Treatise on Poetry* omitted the line which included the reference to A. Csillag – vide B. Chrzastowska, J. Fiećko, B. Kaniewska, P. Nowak, W. Ratajczak, *Wypisy*

but, paradoxically, it has acquired, as a monument of popular culture, exclusive features. In other words: the knowledge of certain messages was once a sign of being a participant of the same culture. Today, that means erudition. And that is the role in which Anna Csillag is now placed in various expressions. That might mean that her further, not solely artistic, career will continue without any major hindrance.

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Role model (in) advertising?

(Summary)

The article concentrates on analysing the growing interest of academics in studying advertisements. While arguing why this perspective of reading literature may bring interesting critical results, the article focuses mainly on the character of Anna Csillag and its evolution through the twentieth century. Originally Anna Csillag was created as an advertising strategy to be used in selling hair-growth cream. Boasting beautiful hair, the character grew in popularity across Europe, turning into a public icon of the first half of the twentieth century. Anna Csillag appears as a fictional character in Bruno Schultz's story *Księga (The Book)*. The article also traces other references to this figure in the twentieth and twenty-first century literary and artistic works.

Key words: advertising, Anna Csillag, advertising in literature of 20th and 21st century